

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2768
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AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTYN 6258

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECT: CABINET RESHUFFLE

REF: KINGSTON 6149

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER MANLEY CONFIRMED A MINOR CABINET
RESHUFFLE, AND ANNOUNCED HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT YOUTH/SPORTS
MINISTER SMALL'S RESIGNATION. FONMIN PATTERSON HAS BEEN ELEVATED TO

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER. THESE LATEST MOVES INDICATE CONTINUING
FACTIONAL PROBLEMS IN MANLEY'S PARTY AND HIS ATTEMPTS TO JUGGLE THE
FACTIONS AND STAY ON TOP. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CABINET RESHUFFLE OUTLINED IN THE REFTEL WAS CONFIRMED BY THE
PRIME MINISTER AUGUST 4 WITH ONE EXCEPTION: THE PRIME MINISTER HAS
REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF SPORTS/YOUTH MINISTER HUGH
SMALL AND SMALL'S MINISTRY WILL NOT BE ABOLISHED. APPARENTLY
THE REPORT OF THE ATTEMPTED RESIGNATION WAS TRUE. SO FAR THERE HAS
BEEN NO REPORT OF A REACTION FROM SMALL TO THE REFUSAL. SMALL HAS
BEEN IN HAVANA FOR THE LAST TWO WEEKS.

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3. MANLEY ALSO ANNOUNCED ON AUGUST 4 THAT HE IS APPOINTING FOREIGN
MINISTER P.J. PATTERSON TO THE POST OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER. THIS
EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION HAS NO FUNCTION EXCEPT BEING FIRST IN
LINE TO TAKE OVER WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER IS AWAY. INCIDENTALLY,
PATTERSON HAS BEEN DESIGNATED ACTING PRIME MINISTER AUGUST 22-31.

PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTER COOKE WILL BE ACTING PM AUGUST 9-21. MANLEY WILL BE ON VACATION UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1. THE DEPUTY PM POSITION ALSO CARRIES A CERTAIN HONOR AND, IN THE EYES OF MANY IT HAS A KIND OF DAUPHIN STATUS, THOUGH THIS HAS NOT REALLY BEEN TESTED.

3. COMMENT: THE APPOINTMENT REAFFIRMS PATTERSON'S PREEMINENCE IN THE MODERATE WING OF THE RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP). THE DEPUTY PM APPOINTMENT IS A MILD SURPRISE SINCE NEW MP, NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER DUDLEY THOMPSON, EXPECTED TO GET THE POSITION (AS HE TOLD US PERSONALLY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. KINGSTON 6218). WE ARE NOT PRIVY TO MANLEY'S THINKING, BUT THE ELEVATION OF PATTERSON PROBABLY INDICATES: (A) HE DOES NOT PERCEIVE PATTERSON AS AN IMMEDIATE THREAT, OR AT LEAST HE IS LESS A THREAT (AND LESS FORCEFUL) THAN DUDLEY THOMPSON. GIVING THE POST TO PATTERSON BRINGS HIM IN MORE CLOSELY SO HE WOULD BE LESS INCLINED TO SNIPE FROM THE SIDELINES, AND TELLS HIM THAT AS CHOSEN SUCCESSOR NOW, HE NEED NOT HASTEN OR ANTICIPATE A CHANGE. (B) MANLEY IS BOWING TO MODERATE WING PRESSURE, WHICH HAS BEEN INCREASING AS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS INCREASE; (C) MANLEY WAS POSSIBLY WORRIED BY THE REACTION TO HIS LATEST ANTI-IMPERIALIST OUTBURST AND THE PATTERSON ELEVATION IS AN ATTEMPT TO REASSURE THE BUSINESSMEN AND THE IMF.

4. WITHOUT SOME MORE OF THE STORY IN PLACE, WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE ON HUGH SMALL'S ATTEMPTED RESIGNATION. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN PERSONAL REASONS INVOLVED. ALSO, SINCE A GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION STUDY (COOKE

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COMMITTEE) ADVISED ABOLISHING THE MINISTRY, PERHAPS HE MERELY PUT IN THE RESIGNATION AS A HEDGE AGAINST LOSING HIS MINISTRY ANYWAY. ON THE SURFACE IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR MANLEY TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF THE CURRENT SPOKESMAN FOR THE LEFT-RADICALS IN THE PNP. MANLEY'S TASK IS TO JUGGLE THE FACTIONS TO KEEP HIMSELF ON TOP, AND WITHDRAWAL OF SMALL COULD HAVE EITHER LEFT THE FIELD TO THE MODERATES, OR, MORE DANGEROUSLY, SET UP A SPLINTER RADICAL PNP GROUP WITH A SUBSTANTIAL FOLLOWING, BUT NOT CLOSE TO MANLEY.

5. THE CABINET RESHUFFLE ITSELF IS NOT MAJOR, AND STEMS FROM THE NECESSITY OF ARRANGING A DIGNIFIED RETIREMENT POST FOR PEART, WHO HAS BEEN IN POOR HEALTH. MOST SEEM TO BE PLEASED AT THE APPOINTMENT OF MRS. MCPHERSON-RUSSELL TO THE IMPORTANT EDUCATION MINISTRY. SHE IS HIGHLY RESPECTED AND QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALLY FOR THE JOB, BUT SO FAR AN UNKNOWN IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS. WE SUSPECT HER SUDDEN ELEVATION IS PART OF MANLEY'S CURRENT "MR. CLEAN" EFFORT TO REFURBISH THE IMAGE OF HIS PARTY -- THE EDUCATION MINISTRY DISPOSES OF A HIGHER BUDGET AND MORE PATRONAGE THAN ANY OTHER MINISTRY.
KAVERKAMP

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